

Article - Labor and Employment

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§3–304.1.

(a) An employer may not:

(1) prohibit an employee from:

(i) inquiring about, discussing, or disclosing the wages of the employee or another employee; or

(ii) requesting that the employer provide a reason for why the employee's wages are a condition of employment;

(2) require an employee to sign a waiver or any other document that purports to deny the employee the right to disclose or discuss the employee's wages; or

(3) take any adverse employment action against an employee for:

(i) inquiring about the employee's wages or another employee's wages;

(ii) disclosing the employee's own wages;

(iii) discussing another employee's wages if those wages have been disclosed voluntarily;

(iv) asking the employer to provide a reason for the employee's wages; or

(v) aiding or encouraging another employee's exercise of rights under this section.

(b) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, an employer may, in a written policy provided to each employee, establish reasonable workday limitations on the time, place, and manner for inquiries about or the discussion or disclosure of employee wages.

(2) A limitation established under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be consistent with standards adopted by the Commissioner and all other State and federal laws.

(3) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, limitations established under paragraph (1) of this subsection may include prohibiting an employee from discussing or disclosing the wages of another employee without that employee's prior permission.

(c) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, the failure of an employee to adhere to a reasonable limitation included in a written policy under subsection (b) of this section shall be an affirmative defense to a claim made against an employer by the employee under this section if the adverse employment action taken by the employer was for a failure to adhere to the reasonable limitation and not for an inquiry, a discussion, or a disclosure of wages in accordance with the limitation.

(d) (1) A prohibition established in accordance with subsection (b)(3) of this section against the discussion or disclosure of the wages of another employee without that employee's prior permission may not apply to instances in which an employee who has access to the wage information of other employees as a part of the employee's essential job functions if the discussion or disclosure is in response to a complaint or charge or in furtherance of an investigation, a proceeding, a hearing, or an action under this subtitle, including an investigation conducted by the employer.

(2) If an employee who has access to wage information as part of the essential functions of the employee's job discloses the employee's own wages or wage information about another employee obtained outside the performance of the essential functions of the employee's job, the employee shall be entitled to all the protections afforded under this subtitle.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

(1) require an employee to disclose the employee's wages;

(2) diminish employees' rights to negotiate the terms and conditions of employment under federal, State, or local law;

(3) limit the rights of an employee provided under any other provision of law or collective bargaining agreement;

(4) create an obligation on any employer or employee to disclose wages;

(5) permit an employee, without the written consent of an employer, to disclose proprietary information, trade secret information, or information that is otherwise subject to a legal privilege or protected by law; or

(6) permit an employee to disclose wage information to a competitor of the employer.

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